

2016 - 2019

PAN CHESHIRE

CHILD TRAFFICKING STRATEGY

MULTI-AGENCY STRATEGY



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for SALE

STOP Human Trafficking!



Foreword

Child trafficking destroys lives and its effects damage communities. This strategy outlines The commitment of the Pan Cheshire Childrens Safeguarding Boards namely Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington to ensure all professionals work together effectively to identify child trafficking, support victims and protect those at risk and to take positive action to disrupt and prosecute criminals responsible for this serious crime.

Child trafficking is often thought of as an international or national crime; however it can also be committed within a local area. Trafficking of children can often be linked to sexual exploitation but also includes children who go missing from home or care or are encouraged / coerced into criminal activity.

We are determined to work more closely with our local and national partners to protect children and to stop this terrible crime.

This strategy outlines how we will cooperate, to ensure professionals have the understanding, knowledge and access to clear procedures to ensure they can act swiftly and with confidence to protect vulnerable children and young people. It also recognises the danger of trafficked children being criminalised and will assist professionals to identify those victims and facilitate their access to, safe accommodation advice and support.

This strategy makes clear our unequivocal commitment to tackling child trafficking, it reinforces our strategic intention to provide a renewed focus on the risks to children through trafficking and will facilitate better identification and care for the victims.

Richard Strachan



Independent Chair On behalf of Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington Safeguarding Children Boards

The trafficking of children is not something we will tolerate or accept. This form of child exploitation is often misunderstood and under reported. Under any definition it constitutes the abuse of vulnerable young people. This is unacceptable.

This Strategy will help us work collectively and collaboratively to identify the behaviours that exist to exploit and traffic children.

We will use this information intelligently to prevent and detect, disrupt, stop and eradicate child exploitation and trafficking wherever it takes place, whether this is within Cheshire or beyond our boundaries.

We will support the victims of child exploitation and we will seek out, prosecute and punished those who engage in such activity. There will be no hiding place in Cheshire for those who seek to exploit or traffic children.

This Strategy supports and advocates a multi-agency approach and sets out a clear, co-ordinated response to this unacceptable form of child abuse. Please read it carefully and apply it rigorously.

David Parr

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Parr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

Chief Executive and Chair of Pan Cheshire Missing, Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Group

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1. What is Child trafficking?

Child Trafficking involves the exploitation of a child and is always a child protection issue. The PAN Cheshire LSCB's have adopted the definition of Child Trafficking that is determined by the United Nations as;

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Exploitation includes sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, criminal activity, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Trafficking is not to be confused with smuggling. Smuggling involves the movement of people from one place to another, sometimes for a large fee, but the transaction between the person and smuggler always crosses internal borders, but trafficking can also be within a country. Smugglers transport a person from one area to another and avoid detection and are paid for this, they do not use coercion or threats.

It is accepted that a child cannot consent to his or her own exploitation therefore, even if a child has agreed to travel from one place to another, this could still be considered human trafficking if there is the intent to exploit them either as they travel or at the final destination. The movement of a child can occur across international borders or within one country; the latter is often described as 'internal trafficking'. This means that children who are moved around the UK for the purposes of exploitation, whether they are children from abroad or citizen children, can be considered a victim of trafficking.

There are three elements to trafficking which applies to both children and adults as follows;

The ACT	The PURPOSE	The MEANS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recruitment</i> • <i>Transportation</i> • <i>Transfer</i> • <i>Harbouring</i> • <i>Receipt of persons</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sexual exploitation</i> • <i>Forced labour</i> • <i>Slavery or similar practices</i> • <i>Removal of organs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Threat</i> • <i>Use of force</i> • <i>Coercion</i> • <i>Abduction</i> • <i>Fraud</i> • <i>Deception</i> • <i>Abuse of power or vulnerability</i> • <i>Giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim</i>

There is no single profile for trafficking victims; trafficking occurs to adults and minors in rural, town and city areas. Victims of human trafficking have diverse socio-economic backgrounds and varied levels of education. Traffickers target victims using tailored methods of recruitment and control they find to be effective in compelling that individual into forced labor, criminal activity, sexual exploitation or organ donation.

Despite this however, there are groups that are more likely to be at risk of being trafficked and therefore consideration of trafficking should be made when dealing with the following groups.

- Asylum seekers
- Children who are Missing From Home
- Children who are Sexual Exploited
- Gang and drug related activity
- The homeless.

This is not a definitive list and professionals need to consider how a person's experiences of past abuse and trauma can make them vulnerable targets for people who wish to exploit them. Survivors of human trafficking have come from all socio-economic backgrounds, races, ethnicities, nationalities.

We need to be vigilant across Cheshire to cases where a child may have been trafficked, a few examples of where a child has or may have been trafficked are below.

- A young person is identified as a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation, during her experiences she identifies having had a taxi arranged for her to collect her from her placement and drop her off at the perpetrators house. Additional evidence of trafficking in this case is her being missing from home and entering a property of an adult.
- An unaccompanied asylum seeker is arrested after a police raid on a cannabis farm.
- A number of young Asian males are identified working for Nail bars in Cheshire. It is identified that they have no visa to work within the UK.
- A young person is frequently missing from home. A harbouring warning has been issued to an adult in the property where she has been found. The young person is missing again and attends the same property and is allowed in.

2. Introduction

This strategy sets out the commitment of the PAN Cheshire Safeguarding Children Boards to do everything possible to prevent, and detect the trafficking of children and to respond and support the victims when identified. We recognise that to achieve this, a multi-agency response is required.

Whilst this strategy relates specifically to children it is important to recognise that adults are victims of trafficking too. In the event that you are concerned that an adult is at immediate risk of harm of being trafficked or exploited you should contact 999, if you have concerns you should contact 101 to report your suspicions / concerns to the police, in all instances you should also contact your local Adult Social Care and make a referral.

The trafficking of an adult can also lead to the identification of a trafficked child and vice versa, therefore it is important that when responding to trafficking we do not just focus on children, we have a responsibility to protect people of all ages.

Children cannot consent to their exploitation; therefore, the trafficking of children is a form of child abuse. Trafficking can affect children of all ages. The majority of children trafficked to the UK are already vulnerable because of poverty, educational inequality, job scarcity or lack of family support. Being trafficked can have serious long term effects on a child's life, their physical and psychological health and their education.

Children brought to the United Kingdom may have travelled with the consent of parents who falsely believed that their child would be cared for and have a better life or families may be aware of the risks of sending their child aboard or paying an agent, they may nonetheless see it as a survival strategy that offers the hope of a better life for both child and the family. Other children have been forcibly separated from their families and trafficked to the UK in order to be exploited through servitude modern day slavery or sexual exploitation and there are instances where children and their parents have been trafficked together.

The trafficking of children within the UK can often be linked to the sexual exploitation of children but also includes children who go missing from home or are encouraged / coerced into criminal activity.

Trafficked children will not always recognise that they are being abused and for some children the abuse that they experience is believed by them to be consensual. Children will not always recognise the grooming they have experienced. Traffickers control their victims in a number of ways, such as direct violence, or threats of violence- of physical, and / or sexual nature- against the child or his/ her family. They often keep the child isolated, which may be made easier by the child's

inability to speak English. The child may be locked up and deprived of money. Often children are told that they and their family owe large amounts of money commonly defined as debt bondage. For other children the coercion is recognised but they may be too afraid to report it or try and escape from it due to threats of harm or death to themselves or their families and so they comply with the demands on them in order to keep themselves and their families safe. They may also not be aware of who they can tell and how

Whilst Trafficking is different to smuggling, caution still needs to be applied in cases of smuggling. Those people who enter a country illegally and via smugglers are vulnerable to exploitation for example a child who has lost their parents is vulnerable to abuse by virtue of not having a protective adult. Adults are equally as vulnerable to exploitation when arriving into a country where they have limited resources or money and as a result perpetrators take advantage to their circumstance

3. Purpose of the strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure a clear, co-ordinated response to trafficked Children across Cheshire in line with the five key priority areas

1. **Strategic commitment across all areas**
2. **Identify, improve awareness, understanding and recognition**
3. **Prevent Trafficking**
4. **Protect and develop positive interventions and support for victims**
5. **Prosecution of perpetrators**



In order to achieve our objectives we will need to ensure effective multi-agency working to identify those children vulnerable to or who are being trafficked. Practitioners should utilise the expertise advice and guidance from national organisations not just our local partners. Agencies such as the UK Visas and Immigration department may be able to advise of when a child came into the UK whilst ECPACT hold a wealth of information on emerging national trends, research, legislation and vulnerabilities of children all over the world. We need to understand the problem and the impact it has on children and we need to ensure we have a child centre approach.

1

Strategic commitment: The Local Safeguarding Children's board will ensure that agencies understand their roles and responsibilities and will ensure a co-ordinated response to the issue of trafficking. The Pan Cheshire Strategic group will develop the communication strategy and co-ordinate training, policy and procedures in addition to delivering in the five priority areas.

2

Understanding: The Local Safeguarding Children's boards will raise awareness across professionals, young people, parents and carers, residential and foster care settings so that all know how to recognise the signs and take and make appropriate actions to keep themselves and others safe.

3

Prevention: The Local Safeguarding Children's boards will ensure that it understands who the vulnerable groups of children are using intelligence information locally and nationally to build profiles of those vulnerable groups and will ensure early identification of those children in order to prevent further abuse.

4

Protection and intervention: The Local Safeguarding Children's boards will ensure appropriate services for young people who are victims of Trafficking, it will quality assure through audit and scrutiny that the intervention is child focus and that children are safe and review the provision of specialist services for victims.

5

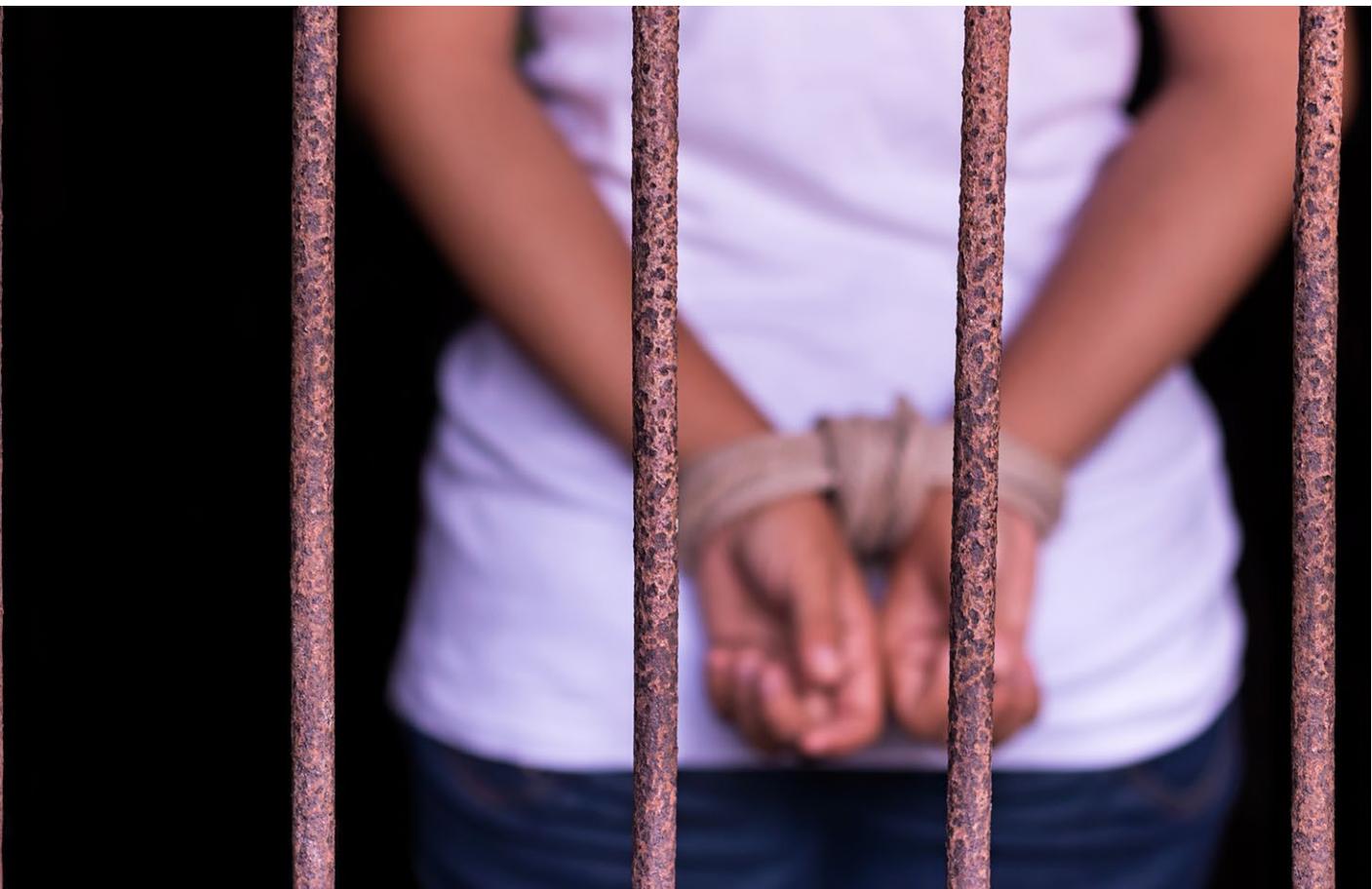
Prosecution: Investigations into trafficking will be thorough and swift and victims will be supported throughout the process and not criminalised.

4. What we know about trafficking as a national issue

The definition of trafficking used within the UK and around the world was implemented by the United Nations in response to the growing concerns in respect of Trafficked people around the world. In order to tackle the issues around Trafficking in the UK, the legislation has been strengthened and developed along with our understanding.

The following are recent bills and legislation that underpin our work with children who have been trafficked.

- The Modern Slavery Act 2015,
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992,
- UK Human Trafficking Strategy 2011,
- New DFE guidance 2014,
- Implementation of EU Directive on Trafficking 2013



The National Referral Mechanism provides a way for all agencies to share their information across the country for the greater detection of victims and perpetrators.

In response to the growing issue, the government released a strategy which set out their priorities in dealing with trafficking and set down their expectations of how agencies should also be addressing the issue.

Since 2009 the number of reported child victims of trafficking to the National Referral Mechanism has increased. The figures published by the National Referral Mechanism in relation Child Trafficking is as follows:

- There has been a 40% increase in the number of referrals to the National Referral Mechanism in 2015 from 2014
- The most common type of exploitation for children reported in 2015 was Labour exploitation which includes criminal activity.
- 982 Children were referred to the National Referral Mechanism in 2015 due to concerns of trafficking
- 217 children were referred due to CSE*105 UK National, 112 were non-UK nationals
- 405 were categorised as not defined exploitation
- 288 referrals were regarding Labour exploitation
- 3 related to organ harvesting (all male)
- 69 related to domestic servitude.

The Referrals to the National Referral Mechanism provide an overview of concerns across the country however they do not reflect the full extent of the issue throughout the UK. It is important therefore that there is a multi-agency response to the detection and prevention of trafficking.

The PAN Cheshire Issues

The trafficking of children does not fall into a single process for their exploitation.

- Within Cheshire the current most commonly identified area of trafficking for exploitation relates to Child Sexual Exploitation
- PAN Cheshire has a Strategy in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Children Missing From Home and Care. We identify in Cheshire that for every child who is sexually exploited there has also been at least one incident of the child being Missing From Home/ Care. The links between Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing From Home/ Care can be intrinsically linked to the trafficking of a child and as a result the priority areas for all three of these issues are related. You can find both of these strategies using this link; <http://www.proceduresonline.com/pancheshire>
- Cheshire can also make links between criminality and trafficking within our area. For those children who are drawn into groups or gangs for the purposes of being exploited for criminal behaviour for example drug related offences, the issue of Trafficking must be considered for each of these children and Cheshire is committed to ensuring that trafficked children are not criminalised as a result of the exploitation they have experienced. Cheshire will need to remain vigilant in respect of Gang activity.
- Cheshire has also seen a number of unaccompanied asylum seekers where Trafficking must be a serious consideration. For these children swift detection and action is required to reduce the risk of perpetrators locating them and them experiencing further incidents of abuse and exploitation.

Whilst these areas are identified within Cheshire they will not be the only areas of exploitation experienced by trafficked children and agencies must be vigilant in order to identify and protect young people from this crime.

5. Pan Cheshire principles in responding to a trafficked child

The principles underpinning a multi-agency response to the Trafficking of Children Include:

Trafficked children are in need of protection and should receive services under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. This should be instigated at the earliest opportunity following identification

Children and young people may be fearful of disclosing that they are trafficked due to threats of violence and death against them and their family, perpetrators of modern day slavery and sexual exploitation will use grooming and other forms of abuse to keep their victims quiet. Their accounts can sometimes be confused and contradictory. They may be fearful of their traffickers and the control they believe they still exert. Working with these children requires a child centred approach, and can take time before they can trust adults in authority sufficiently. Agencies need to be committed to working at their pace

Statement of Intent: *We will listen, we will demonstrate compassion and empathy, we will provide the support required to overcome adversity, we will provide safe places.*

The trafficking of children has significant financial gains for perpetrators, and maybe part of a wider gang with international links, concerns regarding trafficking must be reported to the police and National Referral Mechanism.

Statement of Intent: *We will disrupt, we will pursue prosecution, we will share our information for the protection of others.*

Children may have committed criminal acts as a consequence of their exploitation, for example the oversight of Cannabis farms, the dealing of illicit substances, criminal activity related to theft. In these circumstances children should be supported rather than criminalised and there must be recognition that they may be fearful of prosecution as a result of what they have been forced to do.

Statement of Intent: *We will work together to prevent criminalisation of our children, to protect our children and to support them to achieve.*

Children may be sexual exploited through a variety of settings, eg nail bars, night clubs, and through abusive images. Children trafficked for other reasons will often also be vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Current evidence suggests this is mainly girls aged 12-17, although little research has been conducted regarding boys. Most identified source areas are China, Eastern Europe, Africa, UK Nationals

Children cannot consent to being trafficked and the exploitation that follows as a consequence regardless of their age. In instances where the child is from another country a parent may have initially consented to them being brought to the UK on the belief that their child would have a better life. Traditional practices, such as migration and private fostering, can make children vulnerable to trafficking. In some countries, children moving unaccompanied at a young age are part of a deep rooted socialisation process in which it is expected that a child will leave home and work elsewhere to provide for their family. Families have been known to sell their children and therefore the possible role of the family in the trafficking must be established before any attempt is made to reunite a child with them.

UK Law's which protects victims are outline below:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009
- UKBA Code of Practice 2009



A Multi-agency Strategy meeting must take place where a child may have been Trafficked and Child protection procedures followed, considering the immediate risks of harm and risk of abduction.

Where parents are deemed to be complicit in the trafficking all other children within the household must be considered as possibly at risk and assessments carried out.

A referral to the NRM National Referral Mechanism, which is a victim identification and support process must be made in cases where Trafficking is identified. The National Referral Mechanism should also be informed of all perpetrator details. It is designed to make it easier for different agencies involved in a trafficking case (Police, UKBA, LAs (HSC Trusts in NI and NGO's) to;

- Co-operate and share information about potential victims and;
- Facilitate access to advice, accommodation and support.

Children are not always safe once they have been identified. This can be because the care and accommodation that they are given does not always provide them with the necessary protection. Specialist foster care is the ideal option for all child victims of trafficking, but this is not always possible. Agencies need to plan how to keep children they have identified safe

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), a child victim of trafficking is entitled to special protection because of their vulnerability. The best interests of the child (Article 3) should be a primary consideration in all actions taken concerning the child, including their return to country of origin. Recently the UK Government agreed to lift the Reservation on Article 22 of the UNCRC with regards to immigration and nationality. This means that the principles within the UNCRC must be applied to all children, irrespective of their immigration status.

6. Priorities

1. Strategic commitment across all areas

Trafficking takes place within our communities and across Cheshire boards. Information must be shared by partners to identify, prevent, support, prosecute and protect children from Trafficking. By sharing information both locally and nationally through the National Referral Mechanism, we can create a better local and national picture for trafficked children, co-ordinate services and better protect children.

Each local authority will develop their own action plans which will support the strategic Pan Cheshire action plan. Each Safeguarding Children Board will be responsible for ensuring effective implementation of the action plan and multi-agency engagement.



- PAN Cheshire strategic group will use intelligence locally and national data, to build a picture of the population across the footprint and national trends to inform activity to prevent, protect and pursue.

2. Identify, improve awareness, understanding and recognition

Cheshire will ensure a multi-agency training package to be delivered across the four areas which will be adapted only to include local processes. By developing a common training programme we can ensure unity and consistency across the areas supporting shared understanding and cross boarder working.

Agencies will work together to share information which will help identify potential victims and victims of Trafficking. Each area will implement a multi-agency strategy meetings process and will convene a multi-agency meeting in order to share information and develop a plan to address the presenting and immediate issues and longer term support.

The multi-agency strategy meetings will consider both local support and national support services in order to ensure appropriate care and protection of children. Where information shared in the strategy meeting identifies a cross boarder issue either within Cheshire or outside of Cheshire the information will be immediately shared with both the local police force and Children's Social Care.

The Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing/Trafficked Children's sub group will receive data regarding activity locally and nationally this coupled with audits on specific cases will be shared with the Pan Cheshire strategic group in order to consider

any Cheshire trends and themes that assist us in awareness raising, identifying appropriate services and prevention.



- we will ensure compliance against the Trafficked children Protocol,
- We will use the information and intelligence gathered to ensure the training provided supports professionals to keep children safe.
- We will utilise the auditing framework to assess quality of provision, identify gaps in service and ensure children are receiving appropriate care and support.
- We will develop best practice guidance

3. Prevent Trafficking

Prevention requires a co-ordinated approach across partner agencies. It requires professionals to be able to identify possible cases of trafficking and respond swiftly and effectively. Prevention is dependent on professional curiosity and a sharing of information. Immigration control is seen by some as a way of preventing trafficking, but while robust border control is necessary to identify victims entering the UK, not all victims of trafficking are from outside of the UK therefore victims should not be defined by immigration status.

Referrals to the National Referral Mechanism allow local intelligence information to be shared nationally increasing the likelihood of early identification of victims.

A PAN Cheshire Communication strategy will be developed by the PAN Cheshire Strategic group to raise awareness of trafficking locally.



- We will ensure that any cases where trafficking is suspected will be referred to the National Referral Mechanism in order to inform the national picture.
- We will ensure that our Operational Groups and teams consider trafficking in all Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing from Home/ Care cases.
- We will ensure high quality training to multi-agency partners so that they understand how to identify trafficking and what to do when they suspect it.

4. Protect and develop positive interventions for victims

When victims have been identified partners must work together to ensure that they are protected from further harm. If a child is accommodated by the authority as a means of providing safety, the placement must be supported to ensure that they understand the risks associated to trafficking. It is not good enough to move a child out of the area, the placement made must be given appropriate resources and strategies to protect that child from abduction and further exploitation. The plan must include the prevention and management strategy of any risk that the child may go missing. . In some circumstances where the risk of abduction is high and or where the trafficking is part of a criminal network/ gang a safe house will need to be considered, in these instances the Head of Service/ Operational director / Chief Executive will need to be notified.

In line with all statutory functions, where a child is not a UK national a translator must always be sought. The translator should be from the commissioned service and must be vetted appropriately.

Some children will be fearful of potential prosecution for criminal offences that they have committed as a result of the exploitation they have suffered or by virtue of their experiences maybe mistrusting of police and authority figures. It is imperative therefore that frontline officers are fully training in detecting the signs/ vulnerable groups of children likely to be trafficked and they should be interviewed by a suitably trained police officer and not criminalised as a consequence of their exploitation. EDT/OOH/PACE officers must all be trained in trafficking in order to challenge / highlight the issue of trafficking to an interviewing/arresting officer. Unaccompanied asylum seekers or illegal immigrants must be considered as potential victims of trafficking.

Taking the right approach to engaging these vulnerable young people is crucial if we are to stand any chance of supporting them to break free from exploitation. We want to improve victim's experiences of being supported, ensuring that they are listened to, respected and given choices about how they are helped.



- We will ensure that the operating protocols are clear and embedded in practice supporting practitioners to act swiftly and with confidence
- We will protect work on a multi- agency basis to ensure that victims of trafficking are not criminalised.
- We will identify and quality assure services to work directly with trafficked children.

5. Prosecution of perpetrators

Investigations into cases of trafficking will be undertaken by a suitable qualified officer. Police will continue to investigate potential trafficking offences regardless of whether a victim agrees to make statements to the police. We know that children do not always understand that they have been exploited for example in sexual exploitation cases a child may believe that sexual activity has been consensual. As a child is unable to consent to be trafficked each case should be pursued despite the refusal of a victim to make a statement.

Multi-Agency partners will support the police in their investigations by sharing the information that they have in respect to the perpetrators and victims, this information will be shared without delay.

During the course of police investigation and prosecution, victims will be provided with support both practically and emotionally. Regular updates on the case will be shared with agencies in order to ensure that the care plan for the child is appropriate and safeguards the child effectively.



- We will actively monitor prosecution rates in instances of Child Trafficking and ensure our services are tenacious in the prosecution and disruption of offenders

7. Measuring success

- We have information about the scope of the issues in PC and this informs our strategy
- We have delivered a communications campaign to raise awareness and there is evidence that front-line practitioners are aware of the issues and how to respond
- We deliver the multi-agency training and we demonstrate through post course evaluation that the training has improved practice
- The quality of response for children identified as having been trafficked is good/outstanding
- Practice reflects consideration of the links between all 3 issues –e. Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing/Trafficking.: That all plans for children and young people for Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing/Trafficking have considered the risks in relation to all
- Support in place for trafficked children is of a high quality
- All relevant legislation is used to disrupt and prosecute perpetrators



